

York County Board of Supervisors
Ground Rules for Conduct and Interaction
February 23, 2000

We, the five members of the York County Board of Supervisors, hereby affirm our commitment to each other to observe certain ground rules in the conduct of the Board's business and in our interaction with one another. We recognize that agreement on ground rules will not ensure, nor is it intended to ensure, agreement on all issues. However, recognizing that we will disagree from time to time on issues, a firm commitment to our ground rules will ensure that we engage in constructive discussion even when those disagreements do occur.

By our signatures, we hereby affirm, both individually and as a group, our commitment to:

1. ***Defer action to allow consideration and reflection on issues and comments by members.*** As we consider certain issues, engage in debate among ourselves, and receive comments from the public, it is important that we allow adequate time for reflection on the points raised in the debate and comments. Deferral of the decision to a future meeting is an appropriate way to allow such thoughtful consideration and to ensure that the public does not perceive our decision to have been hasty and their comments to have been disregarded. While deferral on every issue is not necessary, from time to time one or more members will desire a delay. We agree to grant such requests unless there is a compelling and over-riding reason not to do so. However, we further agree that we will not use the deferral option to unnecessarily or unreasonably delay action on an issue (i.e., to engage in a "filibuster").
 2. ***Strive for a high level of consensus on major issues.*** From time to time the Board will consider certain "major" issues (e.g., authorizing construction of a large new building; making a large financial contribution to support an organization, regional project, etc.; adopting a significant new law or policy). These issues, which can't be identified in advance, but will be apparent as they are considered and debated, are of such significance that we should seek to reach unanimity, or near unanimity, in our decision. In other words, some issues are too important for a 3:2 vote and, therefore, we will strive to reach a level of consensus that will allow each member, even if not able to vote with the majority, to at least support the decision because of their trust in the wisdom of the Board as a whole.
 3. ***Share all relevant information and avoid surprises.*** This includes sharing information on all sides of the issue, even if it does not support our individual position. We also will keep each other informed of developing information and issues concerning matters before us. We commit that we will not "drop bombshells" in the midst of a meeting or discussion, and instead will ensure that such information has been shared with each member in advance, whether by telephone, e-mail, or discussion in person.
-

4. ***Manage emotions and impulses.*** We recognize that our effectiveness as a Board depends on how well we, as individuals, work together. We also recognize that our effectiveness can be seriously damaged if we allow negative emotions or impulses to be a part of our discussions and interactions with one another. We will strive to be agreeable in our disagreements.
5. ***Honor and respect differences and diversity.*** We are five individuals, with different personalities, talents, and viewpoints. These differences and diversities will help us be a better Board, as long as we view them as positive and beneficial influences.
6. ***Contribute in ways that add value.*** Talking about and debating issues adds value to the decision-making process. Talking about and criticizing personalities does not.
7. ***Recognize that outcome is influenced by the approach.*** No matter how popular or widely approved our actions, we recognize that the process and manner we use in working toward that action can taint it.
8. ***Protect and nurture the trust level; building it is difficult...rebuilding it is next to impossible.*** To be effective as a Board, we must work together for common purposes. Our ability to do so is influenced by the words and deeds of one another and how true they ring in terms of pursuing those common purposes. Similarly influenced is the public's confidence and trust in the Board itself.
9. ***Create and nurture an atmosphere that encourages discretionary effort.*** Rule #9 will take care of itself, if we follow Nos. 1 through 8. As a result, both our employees and we will be encouraged to give that extra percentage of effort that will make York County government "world-class."

Walter C. Zaremba

Sheila S. Noll

Donald Wiggins

James Burgett

Melanie Rapp

York County Board of Supervisors and County Administrator
Ground Rules for Conduct and Interaction
February 23, 2000

We, the five members of the York County Board of Supervisors and the County Administrator, hereby affirm our commitment to each other to observe certain ground rules in the conduct of the Board's business and in our interaction with one another. We recognize that agreement on ground rules will not ensure, nor is it intended to ensure, agreement on all issues. However, recognizing that we will disagree from time to time on issues, a firm commitment to our ground rules will ensure that we engage in constructive discussion even when those disagreements do occur.

By our signatures, we hereby affirm, both individually and as a group, our commitment to:

1. ***Defer action to allow consideration and reflection on issues and comments by members.*** As we consider certain issues, engage in debate among ourselves, and receive comments from the public, it is important that we allow adequate time for reflection on the points raised in the debate and comments. Deferral of the Board's decision to a future meeting is an appropriate way to allow such thoughtful consideration and to ensure that the public does not perceive our decision to have been hasty and their comments to have been disregarded. While deferral on every issue is not necessary, from time to time one or more members will desire a delay. We agree to grant such requests unless there is a compelling and over-riding reason not to do so. However, we further agree that we will not use the deferral option to unnecessarily or unreasonably delay action on an issue (i.e., to engage in a "filibuster").
2. ***Strive for a high level of consensus on major issues.*** From time to time the Board will consider certain "major" issues (e.g., authorizing construction of a large new building; making a large financial contribution to support an organization, regional project, etc.; adopting a significant new law or policy). These issues, which can't be identified in advance but will be apparent as they are considered and debated, are of such significance that we should seek to reach unanimity, or near unanimity, in our decision. In other words, some issues are too important for a 3:2 vote and, therefore, we will strive to reach a level of consensus that will allow each Board member, even if not able to vote with the majority, to at least support the decision because of their trust in the wisdom of the Board as a whole.
3. ***Share all relevant information and avoid surprises.*** This includes sharing information on all sides of the issue, even if it does not support our individual position. We also will keep each other informed of developing information and issues concerning matters before us. We commit that we will not "drop bombshells" in the midst of a meeting or discussion, and instead will ensure that such information has been shared with each member in advance, whether by telephone, e-mail, or discussion in person.

4. ***Manage emotions and impulses.*** We recognize that our effectiveness as a Board and Administrator depends on how well we, as individuals, work together. We also recognize that our effectiveness can be seriously damaged if we allow negative emotions or impulses to be a part of our discussions and interactions with one another. We will strive to be agreeable in our disagreements.
5. ***Honor and respect differences and diversity.*** We are six individuals, with different personalities, talents, and viewpoints. These differences and diversities will help us be a better team, as long as we view them as positive and beneficial influences.
6. ***Contribute in ways that add value.*** Talking about and debating issues adds value to the decision-making process. Talking about and criticizing personalities does not.
7. ***Recognize that outcome is influenced by the approach.*** No matter how popular or widely approved our actions, we recognize that the process and manner we use in working toward that action can taint it.
8. ***Protect and nurture the trust level; building it is difficult...rebuilding it is next to impossible.*** To be effective as a Board, and to be effective as a Board/Administrator team, we must work together for common purposes. Our ability to do so is influenced by the words and deeds of one another and how true they ring in terms of pursuing those common purposes. Similarly influenced is the public's confidence and trust in the Board and Administrator, both individually and collectively.
9. ***Create and nurture an atmosphere that encourages discretionary effort.*** Rule #9 will take care of itself, if we follow Nos. 1 through 8. As a result, both our employees and we will be encouraged to give that extra percentage of effort that will make York County government "world-class."

Walter C. Zaremba

Sheila S. Noll

Donald Wiggins

James Burgett

Melanie Rapp

Daniel M. Stuck